10 YEAR REVIEW

1981-91

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY HERITAGE GRANT PROGRAM

Heritage Fund

92-03276/

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Dr. Hugh Walker
Managing Director
Alberta Occupational Health and Safety

Ten years ago, a relatively small grant program took on a large mission: to prevent injuries and ill health resulting from employment and to promote the health and well-being of Alberta workers. Looking back, there have been many achievements. There are training courses offered regularly by educational institutions, industry associations, and unions, developed with grant awards. Research has led to better information on which to base workplace decisions. Conferences initially supported by grant awards are now annual events. Workers at all levels, in industry and government, have benefitted from training programs and materials. Industry, following a successful first occupational health and safety initiative, has gone on to make safety part of the way they do business.

These achievements can be attributed to a simple formula—let workers and employers identify the problems and apply solutions of their industry or occupation. Provide the means to get together to address the problems. Bring in any expertise which is lacking. Properly evaluate and research innovative ideas so that high-quality products are delivered to work sites. Industry takes ownership of solutions, increasing adoption of new procedures and training.

AOHS has recently estimated that poor health and safety practices annually cost Alberta between $1 and $2 billion, not only in Workers' Compensation and insurance costs, but in equipment damage, production losses and the loss of trained workers. The grant program has spent fifty cents annually for each Albertan. The return on each dollar has been high. Countless hours were volunteered by committed project participants. Other agencies co-sponsored projects and donated supplies and services. And most importantly, work site losses have been prevented.

Many Albertans have contributed to the success of the grant program's activities and deserve our thanks. The dedicated grant recipients, who have carried out successful and meaningful projects, are one group deserving credit. Numerous organizations and individuals have given of their time to review and comment on applications. Others have participated on project advisory committees, and reviewed project results. These many contacts have often generated a deeper interest and commitment to occupational health and safety and new partners in our mission.

Six Alberta government departments and agencies, and four individuals representing employers, workers, and the public, have participated in the funding decisions and provided advice to the program. The contributions of Advanced Education, Career Development and Employment, Labour, Personnel Administration Office, the Workers' Compensation Board, and the representatives of the Occupational Health and Safety Council on the Grant Steering Committee are much appreciated.

Looking to the future, the program will continue to respond to Alberta industry needs. Individuals will receive support to attend training and conferences so that work sites will base decisions on the latest information. Top researchers will take on applied research into industry problems. Innovative education will be benefit workers, with continued emphasis on small business.

Over time, how the grant program goes about achieving its mission has changed, in response to changing Alberta industry needs. The mission, however, is still as vital as it was in 1981. There is still work to be done. Just as domestic violence, impaired driving, and environmental problems have become socially unacceptable in a short period of time, so must work-related injuries and ill-health.

PITS TRAINING PROGRAM SAVES LIVES

Over the past 10 years the Occupational Health and Safety Heritage Grant Program has funded over 200 projects. A diverse range of handbooks, videotapes, reports, and research results of interest to Alberta workers and employers have been produced.

While all projects can be classified as either education, research, or conference projects, this classification does not hint at the broad scope of the issues which are addressed. A few projects are highlighted on the following pages to illustrate the impact grant projects are having.

Hydrogen sulphide (H_2S) is a killer. It's also a major component of sour gas and the by-product of more than 70 industrial operations. Thousands of Alberta workers in the oil and gas industry risk exposure to this hazardous gas each day. Since H_2S exposure cannot be avoided at many work sites, workers must be trained to deal with potentially hazardous situations.

The Occupational Health and Safety Heritage Grant Program provided a $101 000 education grant for program development to the Petroleum Industry Training Service (PITS). With guidance and support from the petroleum industry, PITS developed three safety courses for workers who may encounter H_2S at their work site.

Wayne Wetmore, Vice-President of Training and Development for PITS, said the program was put together in response to industry's need for expanded and upgraded H_2S training.

H_2S Alive is a one-day course for all workers in the industry who may be involved with hydrogen sulphide. A second course, H_2S Rescue, teaches workers to rescue victims of an H_2S incident. The Instructor Course certifies instructors to deliver the other two competency-based courses, and includes techniques for effectively teaching adults.

"Alberta is definitely a leader in H_2S training," Mr. Wetmore said. "The first thing we did was look at what was available throughout the world, and we couldn't find anything out there that was better than, or in some cases as good as, what we already had. We believe we have the best H_2S training program in the world."

Since the courses became available three and a half years ago, more than 44,000 workers have completed training and 400 instructors have been certified. Mr. Wetmore said there is a core group of about 125 very active instructors who conduct most of the H_2S training for industry. PITS instructors teach only about 10 percent of the Alive and Rescue programs delivered, but they teach everyone who takes the Instructor Course.

"We want to ensure consistency in instruction, so that everyone who takes a course gets the same course," Mr. Wetmore said. PITS deliberately made course formats flexible so they can be delivered in remote locations. The set-up allows for a number of qualified instructors to offer courses where they're needed. "The worst thing would have been limiting ourselves to a few instructors and having PITS do central training."

Developing the training programs was just the beginning. With other funding, PITS built an H_2S rescue training facility at Nisku, Alberta. The building has a "ready room" and a simulated oil industry environment where life-like rescues are carried out.

Nevertheless, PITS insists upon consistent instruction and quality. Program standards, set by industry and maintained through the H_2S Examination and Certification Committee, are jealously maintained. Instructors are recertified every three years. Students must also repeat courses every three years to maintain their certification.

Sharing Our Expertise

"We've certified instructors from all over Canada. Certified instructors buy exams and books from PITS, and send the completed exams back to us," Mr. Wetmore said. "The Alive course is our biggest seller. We provide a complete set of lesson plans for the Alive and Rescue programs."

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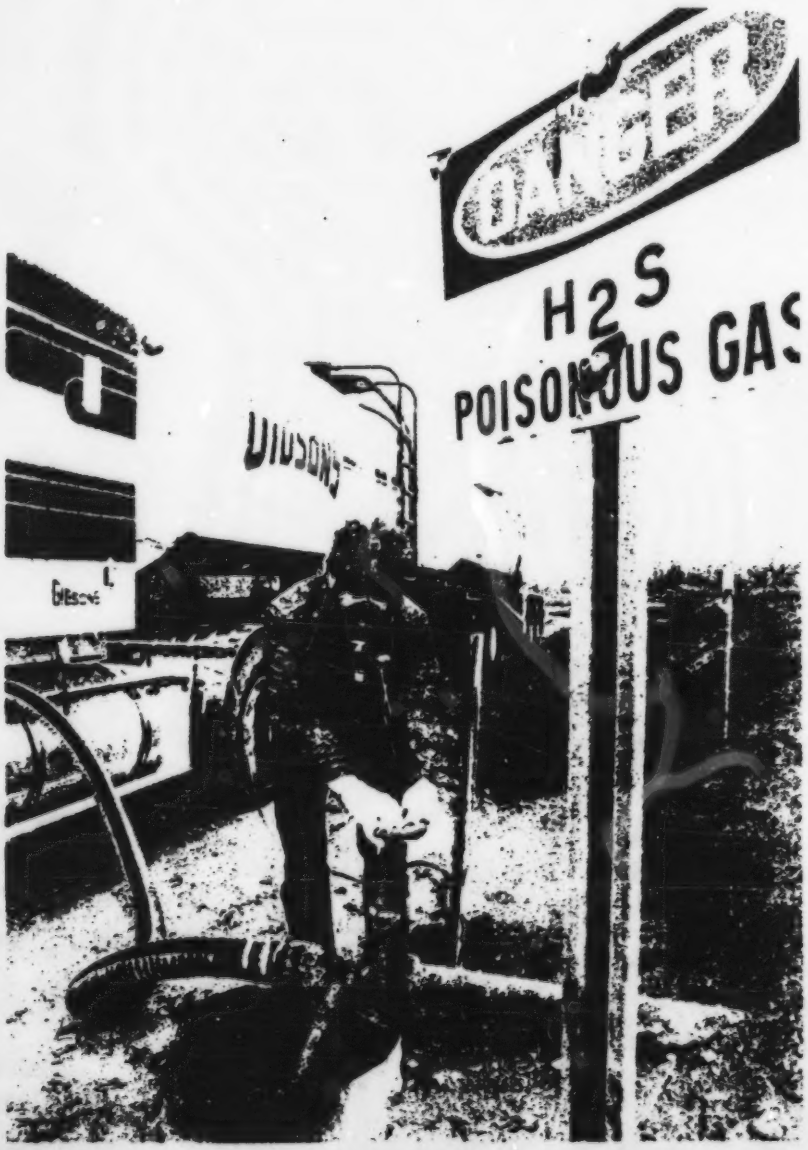
Grant Leads To Other Initiatives

"Students have to rescue dummies that are about the same size and weight as a person. Many go in with no idea of how to lift an unconscious person. When they're unconscious, they can't help you. The students use carrying techniques they've learned in the Rescue course. We can make the room dark or fill it with non-toxic smoke. They find out whether they're using their breathing apparatus properly. It's the best training we can do in a simulated environment." says Wayne Wetmore, Vice President of Training and Development for PITS.



The Petroleum Industry Training Service decided that the training program should be updated every three years, and the first update was introduced in March 1991. "We'll continue to update courses as technologies and information change."

During the last three years, improvements have been made to breathing apparatus and H_2S detection systems. PITS has also responded to the trucking industry by adding an option to the H_2S Alive course that meets their needs

Funding Impact Ongoing

Mr. Wetmore said it's difficult to collect statistics on the number of lives saved through H_2S training. The industry is not static. "We're training more people now than we did three years ago."

The impact of training 17,000 people a year is being felt and will go on for some time to come, Mr. Wetmore said. "Our understanding is that it's making a significant impact on the industry, it's saving lives, and there's no doubt about that."

He added, "We appreciate the contribution the Heritage Grant Program made to this important training. It's a good example of how to use that kind of funding — to save lives."

4 REDUCING INJURIES FROM FLASH FIRES

Flash fires expose workers to the risk of deep burns to large areas of the body. Injuries are worse when clothing continues to burn after the original fire is out. Workers who may be exposed to this hazard need to wear protective clothing that is fire resistant.

The problem faced by Alberta employers and workers in the mid-1980s wasn't a lack of protective fire resistant clothing on the market; it was deciding which fire resistant clothing was best suited to workers' needs.

Dr. Betty Crown and her research team at the University of Alberta received a $183,500 research grant from the Occupational Health and Safety Heritage Grant Program to assess protective work clothing. The research was conducted over three years.

"The research project was conceived because we'd had many questions and requests for help from industry. They wanted to assess their own needs for protective clothing," Dr. Crown said. "There were quite a few different products on the market, but no independent sources of information on product effectiveness. Now we are able to provide that information, as well as an evaluation service."

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The researchers had been working on a number of related projects for some time, according to co-researcher Dr. Katherine Rigakis. After completing small-scale fabric and garment testing under laboratory conditions, the team needed to duplicate an actual industrial situation. "To really see what happened when a flame engulfed a figure wearing a garment, we needed to test the whole garment, not just a fabric sample."

An interdisciplinary team, including Dr. Doug Dale of the Department of Mechanical Engineering, developed an adult-size instrumented thermal mannequin to estimate skin burn damage under various conditions. This mannequin, which is the only one of its kind in Canada and one of only three in existence, allowed the researchers to conduct much more innovative and accurate tests.

"When we started the project and spoke to people in the field, people thought they should recommend heavy cotton for protective clothing," Dr. Crown said. "They really believed heavy cotton was the safest, because if it doesn't ignite, it will protect well and provide insulation. We were able to demonstrate that if a flash fire is short enough the cotton doesn't ignite. But if it does ignite, the cotton becomes the fuel."

Dr. Rigakis noted, "During initial testing, we put the mannequin in untreated cotton and simulated a flash fire. The cotton caught fire at about three seconds, and once it caught, it went. Untreated cotton would catch fire even more quickly at higher temperatures."

Worker Input

"This all sounds like a physical science project, but it wasn't. We started with the needs of workers," says Dr. Crown. The researchers interviewed workers, watched them do their jobs, worked with them in the field and found out what they liked or didn't like about existing protective clothing.

"It's relatively easy to design protective clothing that protects. It is not easy to design protective clothing that people will wear," Dr. Crown said. "When interviewing groups of workers we learned that the importance of aesthetics depended on their work situations and where they were working. For example younger people, primarily men, preferred to wear jeans and jean jackets for work."

Besides the protection and safety offered by a garment, the new assessment system developed takes into account fit, durability, functional design, appearance, maintenance, cost and comfort.

"We look at comfort as being very important. If clothing is too uncomfortable, it will begin to interfere with doing the job comfortably and safely. Comfort can be part of a safety issue as well."

Impacts Felt

"Industry has certainly felt the impact of this research," Dr. Crown said. "Alberta is considered the leader in North America. Industry is taking a lead role in providing protective clothing for workers. I wouldn't have said that three years ago."

The research project increased industry's awareness of the complex issues regarding flame and fire resistant protective clothing. "It was an educational process for both sides as the research was being conducted."

To help clear up some questions, the researchers produced a brochure, "Making Protective Clothing Decisions to guide companies when they are selecting protective clothing. The brochure encourages companies to evaluate each individual situation, because no single product will meet everyone's needs.

"They [Grant Program] were very supportive of the research, and very helpful," says Dr. Rigakis. It was a necessity for answers to be pursued. Today, Alberta is a leader in the area of protective clothing, and that wouldn't have been possible without the funding we received from the Heritage Grant Program."

Dozens of presentations of the project results have been made to garment users, manufacturers and textile suppliers. As a result, other research and standards organizations and many American suppliers are using the university's testing and research capabilities through the Textile Analysis Service.

"All of the research is based at the University of Alberta, but Alberta Occupational Health and Safety has taken the initiative in pushing industry to require protective clothing for workers."

The researchers noted, "When we started, we were testing a testing system. We developed a process for assessing protective clothing. Today, the testing system we developed is not available anywhere else in the world."

Researchers Forge Ahead

"Our research is ongoing," said Dr. Crown. "We took the results of the project and now provide a testing service for the oil and gas industry and other users of protective clothing. We also do evaluations for some producers of protective clothing."

One outgrowth of the research project and the university's testing service is expected to have a significant impact nationwide. The petroleum industry, with the researchers' input, is developing a voluntary industry performance standard for fire-resistant clothing. In the long term, this will likely be put forward as a national standard, Dr. Crown said.

Industry has not only benefitted from the research. It has also supported the research with funds, advice, and participation in field trials. For example, the Canadian Petroleum Association provided financial assistance toward the facility which now houses the thermal mannequin.

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6 THE BANFF ROUNDTABLE: A CATALYST FOR CHANGE

They had the idea, the drive, the contacts and the desire to pull off a Canadian first. What they needed was financial backing. Fortunately, a $55,400 conference grant from the Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Heritage Grant Program provided the seed money that made the Banff Roundtable on Occupational Health and Safety in Alberta a reality.

"The Banff Roundtable was a catalyst for change," says Maureen Shaw, now of the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, of the 1989 initiative. "I think it had a profound impact. We certainly accomplished our goals in providing future directions." The Banff Roundtable was organized by the Banff Centre School of Management.

At the time, Ms. Shaw chaired the Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Council, a tripartite (management, labour and public) statutory body mandated to advise the Minister responsible for Occupational Health and Safety on matters dealing with the health and safety of workers. She and her council travelled widely throughout the province and met with many groups and individuals from all walks of life.

"Alberta had not seen any significant decrease in the number of injuries and deaths due to work-related accidents for a long time. There were still tragic losses due to injury, death and disease. Alberta Occupational Health and Safety couldn't do it all on its own," Maureen Shaw explained.

The message they received from all parties was loud and clear: society's attitudes toward health and safety were changing. People's expectations were changing. Interest in workplace health and safety issues was on the rise. Questions were being asked. Various industries were forming safety associations and studies were being undertaken, but most initiatives were happening in isolation. There was no direction; there was no plan for action.

Ms. Shaw and the OH&S Council realized what was needed: a provincial focus for occupational health and safety questions and issues, and a coordinated approach to activities. And they knew the environment was ripe for change.

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"It was time to bring together key stakeholders in the province to talk about the real issues in health and safety. It was vital that the key players from industry, labour and government sit down together to discuss these important issues," she said. "They needed a catalyst to get them together. Someone had to take the lead."

That's exactly what the organizers of the Banff Roundtable did.

Ms. Shaw said there were several "agendas" for the Banff Roundtable, one of which was raising the profile of occupational health and safety as a critical issue for all players, including the public at large. "We knew that the higher the profile of occupational health and safety was, the easier it would be to share and transmit information and to educate people."

It's difficult to tackle issues without consensus on what the issues are. One objective of the Roundtable was to put potential issues on the table, find out what was happening in terms of health and safety, and finally, to agree upon the key issues facing everyone in industry. To do this, all stakeholders had to be involved in the dialogue.

Enthusiasm Leads To Action

The 90 industry, government and labour leaders who participated in the two and a half day Banff Roundtable not only agreed on the major issues. They also discussed innovative approaches to dealing with Alberta's major occupational health and safety issues.

A large part of the Roundtable's success was due to the involvement of senior level participants. "We had the president of Shell Canada, Jack McLeod, as a keynote speaker representing business. He said the Banff Roundtable was the first time he'd ever sat down for any length of time to discuss health and safety," Ms. Shaw said.

Developments were carried forward to several regional seminars across the province. And, according to Ms. Shaw, the next step in the process came fast on the heels of the seminars.

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The Banff Roundtable had attracted the interest of the Conference Society of Alberta, another tripartite body that provides a forum for discussion of topics of shared interest. Maureen Shaw noted, "As a result of the Roundtable, their Board decided to make occupational health and safety the theme for their conference in Jasper in October 1989. They had the Roundtable group and many more in attendance."

At the end of that conference many participants agreed it was time for action.

"A group met as soon as the conference ended, and formed the Forum for Action on Workplace Health & Safety. This Forum was seeded at the Roundtable and birthed in Jasper within weeks, and it's still ongoing."

The Forum for Action successfully links the Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Council, the Minister responsible for Alberta Occupational Health and Safety, the department itself, and senior industry representatives including employers and labour.

Ms. Shaw noted, "Now it's up to them to carry the torch, and continue together to set priorities and directions for the future.

Roundtable Was The Milestone

"The Banff Roundtable is a good example of how the Heritage Grant Program can be used. Funding from the program was not ongoing, but the assistance provided is having long term and positive results. It's still raising awareness amongst principal workplace players. And it's led to positive action."

Best of all, according to Shaw, the Roundtable raised the profile of Alberta as a leader yet again.

"Alberta was, and is, the leader in having pulled together key stakeholders and openly discussing issues," she said. "We had observers from Ontario at the Roundtable, and they were very impressed with the level of commitment and the openness of discussions. The event has been written about in health and safety journals across the country. Even the International Labour Organization noticed the Roundtable."

Ms. Shaw said, "We attracted national attention and helped shape the future of occupational health and safety in Alberta. We ventured out on an unknown road to the future, and I, for one, would definitely do it again."

Maureen Shaw is currently chairman of the Council of Governors, Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, based in Hamilton, Ontario.

HEALTH AND SAFETY FOR SMALL BUSINESS

A worker's risk of injury in small businesses is about 40% higher than in large business. In Alberta, approximately one third of the employed labour force works in small business. Often concentrated in high hazard industries, small businesses experience higher injury and illness rates and more problems with health and safety at their work sites than larger businesses.

The Canadian Organization of Small Business Inc. (COSB), with an award of $146,140 from the Occupational Health and Safety Heritage Grant Program, prepared a three part manual dealing with the development of cost-effective health and safety programs for small businesses. A steering committee of small business and labour representatives reviewed the manual as it was being developed.

Together the parts provide a step-by-step plan to develop, implement, and maintain cost-effective health and safety practices that work in a small business setting. *Getting Started* presents a basic overview of occupational health and safety issues and principles. *Planning and Procedures* moves on to more detailed planning and procedures to prevent occupational health and safety problems. *Working Together* takes a more comprehensive look at management responsibilities, the involvement and training of employees, and some broader employee health issues.

All three parts of the Manual are designed to motivate the owners of small businesses to reduce workplace injuries and illnesses, and provide a guide on establishing an effective occupational health and safety program. The program is distributed to small businesses interested in implementing an occupational health and safety program at their work sites or improving an existing program.

FOREST INDUSTRY TACKLES HIGH RISK

Forest industry workers face the highest risk of work-related death in Alberta: 14 times the provincial average. Between 1984 and 1989, grants enabled the Alberta Forest Products Association (AFPA) to develop occupational health and safety training materials to address the industry's hazards. Since 1984, the forest industry's lost-time claim rate decreased by 34%.

Safety Manuals for Workers

The AFPA identified three hazardous activities where workers needed more safety knowledge. Three pocket sized manuals which workers can carry with them for ready reference were developed. The topics covered include chain saw use, logging, and log hauling. These three publications were produced with grants totalling $166,985.

The Chain Saw Safety Manual for Alberta is now in its third printing; there are over 8100 copies in use. Other industries use this manual as well. The booklet covers chain saw safety devices, personal protective equipment, and safe work practices. The Logging Safety Manual for Alberta discusses hazards at the work site; falling, limbing and topping; and skidding and loading. Over 4450 copies are in use. Safe Log Transport outlines the basic components of log hauling, including the responsibilities of different workers at the loading site. Over 6100 copies are in use.

Video Instruction

The AFPA also produced a 15 minute video training aid for chain saw operators which demonstrates safe work procedures. This videotape complements the training manuals. More than 100 copies of the video are in use, including training courses for workers in remote areas. This project received $18,500 from the grant program.

Instructor Manual

To help foremen teach chain saw and logging safety, the AFPA produced the Chain Saw Operator's Course and Instructor's Guide with a grant of $113,000. The Course provides 27 training modules which can be taught independently, to novice or experienced workers. The foreman selects the modules covering the training topics of interest and offers them at the work site. Teaching tips are included for inexperienced instructors.

These materials are now in their third printing.

SAFE HANDLING OF PESTICIDES

Chemical pesticides are commonly used to control unwanted vegetation and insects. However, exposure to pesticides from improper handling could lead to occupational illness. In order to reduce the risk, workers and farmers need to know how to wear protective gear and proper handling procedures.

With the assistance of an $18,400 grant, Abraxas Communications Ltd. produced a videotape, "Basic Safety for Pesticide Applicators," and a trainer's handbook. Other government and industry sponsors also contributed funding to the project.

The videotape describes the importance of choosing proper protective equipment and clothing, understanding the product's hazard label, the material data safety sheet, work site hazards, fire extinguisher selection, spill clean up and first aid. The trainer's handbook provides additional information to support the videotape.

Since the videotape became available this year, over 120 copies have been distributed.

TRAINING UNION MEMBERS

Insufficient resources and training can be part of the challenge of effectively delivering the occupational health and safety message to large numbers of workers. Committed to occupational health and safety, the Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL), representing many Alberta unions, took on the task of getting the message to union members.

The challenge was met with the assistance of a $369,315 grant. With Heritage Grant Program support, the AFL developed "Health and Safety Training for Labour Representatives." The course provides an introduction to core occupational health and safety topics which are required knowledge for an occupational health and safety trainer. Topics covered ranged from toxic substances, noise, stress, legislation, joint work site health and safety committees, ventilation, materials handling, and safety audits.

A group of Alberta union representatives were trained as health and safety instructors during a month-long "train-the-trainer" course held in both Edmonton and Calgary. Students were exposed to a variety of teaching methods relating to adult education, as well as examining their role as instructors.

The core group of instructors, upon completing the course, went on to train some 220 health and safety representatives from 25 Alberta unions, in ten Alberta communities.

Advanced Instructor Training

Just over half of the core group of instructors went on to participate in two more weeks of study as part of the AFL Advanced Instructor Education project. In an effort to develop their skills and knowledge as health and safety instructor's further, the group examined instructor training, ergonomics, research principles, epidemiology, chemical testing, and radiation on the job.

A further grant of $52,930 allowed the AFL to develop an "Advanced Instructor Training Manual" and to provide the advanced training.

Project results must be communicated to industry and implemented at the work site: this is key to the success of projects funded by the Grant Program. Grant recipients must identify how workers and employers will benefit and how the project results will be promoted. Industry, labour and professional associations are in a position to directly apply new solutions to workplace problems. By funding these groups, the Grant Program aims to maximize benefits to Alberta workers.

At least 60% of all projects have outcomes or results which can be applied in more than one industry. Most of these industries have very high accident rates. They include oil and gas well drilling and servicing, forestry, transportation, construction, and mining.

Education Courses

Educational institutions have also received significant support from the Grant Program. Technical institutes, colleges, and universities have received 55% of grant funds, reflecting the 1985 recommendation of the Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act, placing special emphasis on involving post-secondary educational institutions. Institutions across Alberta have developed new courses in, for example, safety engineering, occupational hygiene and nursing, and continue to offer these to the public. The benefits will be long lasting as workers and students are able to pursue professional and job-related occupational health and safety training which was previously not available in this province.

Promotion of Project Results

Since 1987 the Grant Program has surveyed grant recipients to find out how they have promoted the results of their projects. From 1981 to 1991 the Grant Program funded 201 projects. Not all projects have records of the number of publications distributed, presentations made or workers trained. The results presented in the table understate the actual dissemination of results and the use of grant produced materials.

Materials are Available

Videos, books, and manuals produced with Grant Program sponsorship have been placed in the Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Library for public circulation. The library serves industry and the public throughout Alberta. Albertans can also order copies of project reports from Alberta Occupational Health and Safety's regional offices. Materials are also sent to the National Library of Canada and the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety.

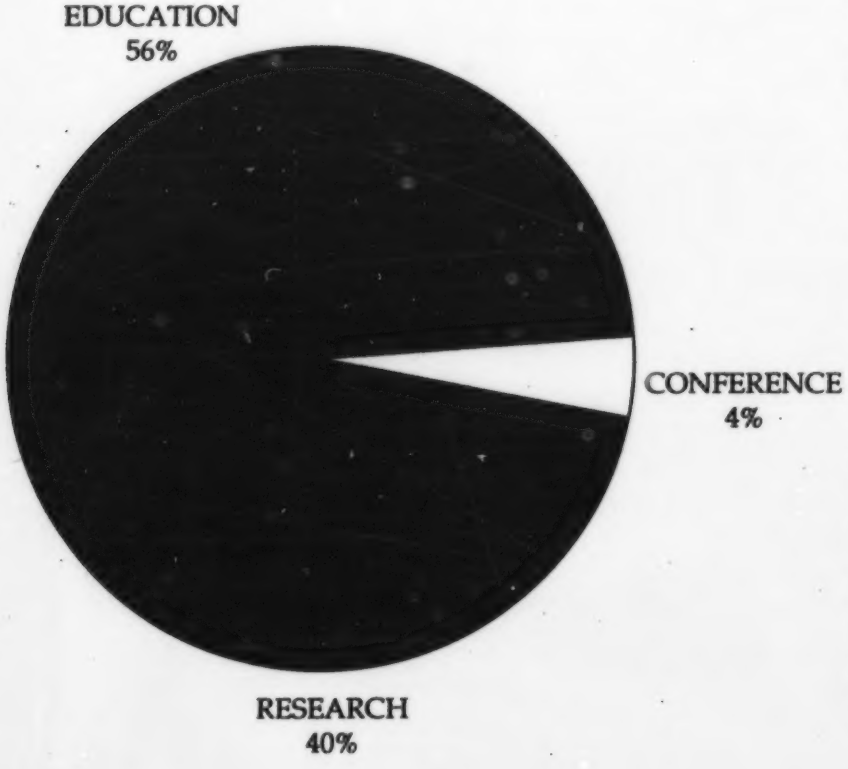
Reports describing ongoing and completed projects are distributed to the public. Reports are provided to: occupational health and safety nurses and safety practitioners employed in industry, organizations interested in occupational health and safety (such as hospital associations and municipalities), and individual workers and organized labour. Information on funded projects is also available from status reports, *Occupational Health & Safety Magazine*, the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety data base, the news media, and from grant recipients.

Promotion of 130 Completed Projects

Copies of reports, booklets, videotapes in circulation	174,859
Courses available from education institutions and industry groups	32
Workers, employers, and health and safety professionals trained in these courses	113,281
Presentations of results at conferences, industry and professional association meetings	481
Research reports produced	72
Books and manuals published	31
Articles in journals	169
Papers in conference proceedings	53
Videotapes or films produced	23
Public use of videotapes from the Occupational Health and Safety Library	1775
Articles in *Occupational Health & Safety Magazine*	85

Types of Awards

FUNDS AWARDED BY GRANT TYPE APRIL 1981 - MARCH 1991



Education Grants

Education grants are used to develop innovative educational programs which emphasize the recognition, avoidance and control of hazards related to work. Funds may also be provided to evaluate the effectiveness of new educational programs.

Research Grants

Research grants support scientific activities designed to increase the understanding of occupational health and safety and assess new strategies for dealing with problems. Research is conducted to fill gaps in knowledge or provide information required to solve problems. With new knowledge, it is often possible to develop both technical and procedural solutions to safety problems. Solutions may include the design of new equipment, and the development of safe operating guidelines and procedures.

Conference Grants

Conference awards provide partial support for conferences in Alberta which increase understanding and awareness of health and safety issues related to work. Grant funds are normally used to defray the costs of bringing experts to the province, and of planning activities. Albertans may also receive support to attend conferences which enhance the knowledge and expertise of occupational health and safety practitioners in the province.

Projects Approved Between April 1990 and March 1991

Education Projects

Survey and Mapping Safety Certification Program
Alberta Society of Surveying and Mapping Technologies ($51,500)

Surveyors work at many different sites, usually for short periods of time. Often scheduling excludes them from company training programs. The project is developing a safety information manual and certificate program for surveyors. The program will deal with three main work settings: bush work, construction and the oilfield. Once surveyors have this basic training, they will be better able to recognize and control occupational health and safety hazards. The Society will continue to train surveyors throughout the province after the project ends.

Woodlands Health and Safety Program - Small Operators
Alberta Logging Association ($50,000)

Small woodlands companies have a higher than average injury rate in an industry which has a high injury rate. The Association is developing a health and safety program for woodlands companies with 10 or fewer workers. The project will build upon existing materials and information. The safety program will be promoted to small woodlands companies.

Awareness of Chronic Painters Syndrome
Alberta Painters and Decorators Association ($22,000)

Painters and decorators work with numerous chemicals which, when handled improperly, can cause health problems. Many painters do not have specific training for their trade, or knowledge about how to protect their health. The Alberta Painters and Decorators Association is assessing what painters need to know and planning three workshops on the prevention of occupational illnesses. The workshops will be held in northern, central, and southern Alberta.

Education for Small Business
Alberta Workers' Health Centre ($65,000)

Employers and workers in small businesses are difficult to reach with occupational health and safety information. The Workers' Health Centre is offering six two-day courses to provide basic information and raise awareness of workplace hazards and their control. The courses will address these activities: dry cleaning; metal fabrication; beauty culture; furniture refinishing; trenching operations, and butcher shops. The effectiveness of reaching these workers through such courses will be evaluated. Based on the evaluation, the courses or their delivery may be modified, and they will continue to be offered following the end of the project.

Health and Safety on the Job: Distance Learning for Supervisors
ACCESS Network ($31,600)

Supervisors in small businesses have difficulty finding occupational health and safety training tailored specifically for their needs. ACCESS is developing a nine part distance delivery program which will be available to supervisors across Alberta. The program will run on the ACCESS Network, with supporting instruction and a certificate by SAIT. The course materials will also be available for use within businesses or for delivery by other agencies. The total project is being funded in partnership with community and industry sponsors. The grant will produce the first two parts in the series.

Safe Work Practices
Alberta Ready-Mixed Concrete Association ($5050)

The ready-mixed concrete industry has identified a need to outline safe work procedures for mixer truck operators, concrete pump operators, and batch plant operators. The grant will be used to develop, print, and distribute three booklets, each aimed at one of the target groups. Adoption of safe operating procedures by companies will reduce serious injuries. The project is being funded in partnership with industry sponsors.

Fort Saskatchewan Safe Community
City of Fort Saskatchewan ($5000)

The large petrochemical companies forming the industrial base of Fort Saskatchewan and area have worked together on public and occupational safety issues for some years. A natural extension of these activities was to involve more businesses and the community as a whole in preventing accidents. By promoting the cooperative efforts of over 40 community organizations, the project is increasing awareness of injury prevention. The project is producing ongoing programs such as slip and fall prevention, and promoting first aid and defensive driving training. The programs are reaching businesses, workers, students, and others in the areas of occupational health and safety, and home, recreational, and transportation safety. The project is funded in partnership with industry and government sponsors.

Canadian Occupational Health and Safety Week - 1991
Canadian Society of Safety Engineering (Alberta) ($29,100)

The project promoted the 1991 Canadian Occupational Health and Safety Week throughout Alberta. Educational materials were produced on the theme "Excellence - Today's Goal, Tomorrow's Reward"; safety events such as confined-space entry competition and a personal protective clothing fashion show were held. Chapters in Grande Prairie and Lloydminster have now become active in safety week, bringing the number of active chapters to eight.

Research Projects

An Investigation of the Impact of Alcohol and Drug Use on the Alberta Workplace
Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission ($165,000)

There are concerns among the public, and some industry groups that alcohol and drug abuse are costly and growing problems undermining workplace safety and productivity. There is little factual information on the extent and severity of alcohol and drug-related impacts on the Alberta workplace. AADAC (with the assistance of Price Waterhouse Management Consultants) is managing a comprehensive research study into the prevalence and effects of substance use on Alberta's workplaces. The research is directed by a steering committee representing small and large business, and organized labour. The results will guide future development of prevention and treatment strategies.

Effective Pesticide Decontamination for Clothing, Equipment and Spills
Departments of Clothing & Textiles and Chemistry, University of Alberta ($94,850)

Pesticides are a potential health hazard when handled in an unsafe manner. A common means of pesticide exposure and absorption is through the skin. Using the family washing machine to wash clothes which were worn while applying pesticides may spread the pesticides to other clothing. The researchers will develop safe and practical procedures to remove pesticide residues from work clothes. The procedures will be used by green house workers, farmers, and many others. The focus will be on commonly used pesticides. Laboratory tests will be conducted by the researchers to ensure that the pesticide is completely converted into harmless products, while preserving fabric strength.

Conference Projects

Second Annual Roundtable on Occupational Health and Safety in Alberta: Small Business
Red Deer Chamber of Commerce ($45,900)

A three day meeting of small business owners and workers, occupational health and safety professionals, and government was held in Red Deer. It focussed on what needs to happen to reduce injuries and illnesses at small business work sites and to develop plans of action. Issues examined included the costs of health and safety to small business, the barriers to implementing programs, and the assistance small business requires to solve problems. The Red Deer Chamber of Commerce continues to make occupational health and safety activities part of its mandate and several small business participants left the meeting with action plans to implement back at their work sites.

Targeted Injury Reduction Campaign Forum for Action on Workplace Health and Safety ($30,900)

The food and beverage manufacturing industry has an injury rate twice the provincial average. Serving as a catalyst, the Forum for Action will bring together key personnel within the industry and identify problems, develop solutions, and commit to a plan of action to reduce injuries and illnesses. The success of the project will be determined by whether the industry leaders respond to the challenge and make changes in their industry.

National Symposium to Establish Injury Control Objectives for Canada to the Year 2000
Injury Awareness and Prevention Centre, University of Alberta ($10,000)

The Symposium brought together over 100 representatives from national and provincial agencies with an interest in preventing injuries. Through extensive consultation in advance of the meeting, the Injury Awareness and Prevention Centre realized that, while there is a great deal of activity in injury and prevention control in Canada, there is little coordination between different regions and sectors. The participants met in Edmonton to develop measurable, long-term national injury control objectives which will be used by Alberta organizations in planning and evaluating injury prevention activities. The project was funded in partnership with industry and other government sponsors.

Health and Safety Profile Conference Alberta Federation of Labour ($6800)

The award supported the planning phase for a province-wide three day conference in Red Deer to raise the profile of occupational health and safety issues within the Alberta labour movement. The participants discussed health and safety committees, local networks to address regional concerns, putting health and safety back on the agenda, and union approaches to injury compensation. The project was funded in partnership with labour sponsors.

Review of WHMIS Biohazardous Infectious Materials' Legislation Division of Occupational Health and Safety, University of Alberta ($8200)

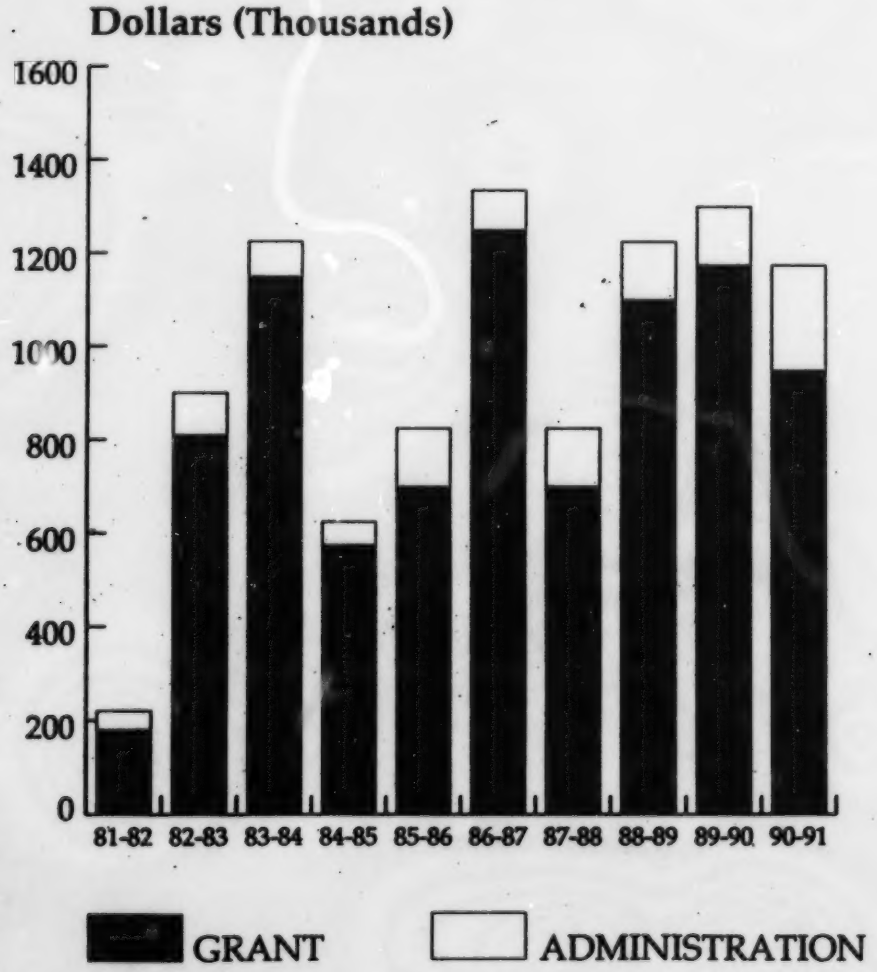
A nationally recognized Alberta expert on biohazards is a member of a national committee. The committee is examining the application of the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) principles to biohazardous infectious materials. As a result of the work, WHMIS will better protect workers who handle biohazardous materials.

Program Expenditures

The figure shows Grant Program expenditures since 1981. Annual budgets have ranged from one to two million dollars.

In 1990-91, 93% of the funds budgeted for grants were expended. Only high quality projects are approved for funding. Funds not expended in one budget year can be accessed in future years.

PROGRAM EXPENDITURES
April 1981 - March 1991



Grant Steering Committee

The Grant Steering Committee was established in April 1981 by the Minister responsible for Workers' Health, Safety and Compensation, to ensure that a broad range of perspectives and expertise contributed to development of the Grant Program. Following a recommendation of the Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act, four public members were appointed to the Committee in January 1985.

The Committee reviews applications for grants and makes recommendations regarding funding. The Committee also advises the Minister responsible for Occupational Health and Safety generally on matters related to operation of the program administration, funding priorities and promotional activities.

Between April 1981 and March 1991 the Committee met 79 times to review and make recommendations on program guidelines, funding criteria and grant applications.

On March 31, 1991, committee membership included four public representatives and seven reptresentatives from six provincial government departments and agencies.

PUBLIC MEMBERS
Labour Representative
Mr. S. Lee
Edmonton

Employer Representatives
Mr. C. Delbridge
Edmonton

Mr. C. Turner
Grande Prairie

Public Representative
Mr. K. McBeth
Edmonton

ADVANCED EDUCATION
Mr. W. Novasky, Director, Program Coordination Branch

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT
Mr. J. Vellacott, Coordinator Counselling Policy

LABOUR
Mr. A. Kennedy, Assistant Deputy Minister, General Safety Services Division

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY
Mr. W. Rozel, Executive Director, Health and Safety Programs

Mr. L. Sorochan, Manager, Education and Promotion

PERSONNEL ADMINSTRATION
Mr. H. Gerling, Manager, Occuational Health and Safety Branch

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD
Mr. W.E. McDonald, Vice-President and Chief Development Officer, Corporate Development

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